

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1 1. (Original) A seat belt system comprising:
2 a cable assembly comprising a flexible cable having a first and a second end,
3 one of the first and second end connectable to a first mechanism and the other of the
4 first and second end connectable to a second mechanism, the cable comprising at least
5 a single strand or formed of a plurality of adjacent strands, the configuration of the wire
6 forming intra-wire spaces between adjacent ones of the wires and the assembly
7 including an easily melted alloy or resin fill material filling the intra-wire spaces, the fill
8 material changes the amount of energy needed to bend the cable in comparison to a
9 cable having no fill material within the intra-wire spaces.
- 1 2. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the first mechanism to which
2 the cable is connected is one of an anchor and a piston associated with a pretensioner
3 and the second mechanism to which the cable is connected is one of a buckle and a
4 buckle-connecting member.
- 1 3. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the fill material also covers the
2 exterior of the cable and is of determinable thickness.
- 1 4. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 3 wherein the thickness of the fill material
2 is variable and wherein the energy needed to bend the cable varies with the thickness,
3 resin or alloy of the fill material.
- 1 5. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the fill material includes a
2 molten solder.

1 6. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the fill material includes one of
2 an alloy of molten: lead, tin, silver, bismuth, copper, antimony, selenium, resins or
3 epoxies.

1 7. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 1 wherein the cable is configured as a
2 component of a buckle pretensioner, the pretensioner including a curved path about
3 which the cable is pulled, one end of the cable extending from the pretensioner
4 connected to a buckle, and wherein the fill material is located at least between the
5 curved path and the buckle.

1 8. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 7 wherein the cable includes multi-strand,
2 multi-cable.

1 9. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 8 wherein the fill material fills intra-wire as
2 well as intra-strand spaces.

1 10. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 9 wherein the pretensioner further
2 includes a tubular housing and wherein an end of the cable is connected to a piston
3 movable within the housing to pull the cable about the curved path.

1 11. (Original) A vehicle occupant restraint system, including:
2 a seat belt pretensioner comprising
3 a curved cable guide and a flexible cable, having a determinable flexibility,
4 the cable including stiffening means for increasing the stiffness of a selected portion of
5 the cable above the determinable stiffness to enhance energy dissipating properties of
6 the cable when bent.

1 12. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 11 wherein the stiffening means
2 includes one of solder, resin or epoxy either of which is pliable within a temperature
3 range of -40 degrees F and 120 degrees F.

1 13. (Original) A vehicle occupant restraint system, including:

2 a seat belt pretensioner comprising

3 a curved cable guide;

4 a flexible cable disposed about the cable guide;

5 first means for moving the cable about the cable guide;

6 wherein the cable has a determinable flexibility and wherein the cable includes

7 energy dissipating means for dissipation of energy, the energy dissipating means

8 located adjacent wires or fibers of the cable, and energy absorbing material configured

9 to resist the bending of the cable as the cable is forced to bend about the cable guide in

10 response to movement of the first means.

1 14. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 13 wherein the energy dissipating

2 means includes stiffening means for increasing the stiffness of a selected portion of the

3 cable above the determinable stiffness.

1 15. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 14 wherein the stiffening means is a first

2 material impregnated within a portion of the cable initially positioned in the vicinity of the

3 cable guide.

1 16. (Currently Amended) A method of making a the flexible cable of Claim 1

2 selectively more stiff, ~~the cable of the type comprising a plurality of small wires bundled~~

3 ~~or twisted together with determinable spaces between portions of adjacent wire, the~~

4 method comprising the following steps:

5 a) providing a length of cable, the cable having a determinable stiffness to

6 bending;

7 b) impregnating a portion of the cable with a liquid material;

8 c) permitting the liquid material to solidify thereby increasing the stiffness of the

9 impregnated length of cable.

1 17. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 wherein the cable is metal and

2 wherein the liquid material is a molten solder.

1 18. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 wherein the cable is metal and
2 wherein the liquid material is one, or an alloy of molten tin, lead, silver, bismuth, copper,
3 antimony and selenium resins or epoxies.

1 19. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 wherein the step of impregnating the
2 cable includes dipping the cable in the liquid material.

1 20. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 wherein the step of impregnating the
2 cable includes spraying the liquid material onto the cable and permitting the liquid to
3 flow into the inter-wire spaces.

1 21. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 including the step of pre-treating the
2 cable prior to the step of impregnating.

1 22. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 wherein the step of pre-treating
2 includes the step of applying flux to the cable.

1 23. (Original) The method as defined in Claim 16 including the step of forming the
2 cable into a desired shape prior to impregnating.

1 24. (Original) A seat belt system comprising:
2 a seat belt buckle assembly, the assembly comprises: a flexible wire cable
3 subassembly having a first and a second end, one of the first and second end
4 connected to an anchor and the other of the first and second end connected to a buckle,
5 the wire cable subassembly including a wire cable comprising a multi-wire strand of
6 these individual wires or threads and a solid material filling any intra-wire spaces
7 between adjacent wire or threads.

1 25. (Original) The system as defined in Claim 24 wherein the solid material, in addition
2 to filling any intra-wire spaces, also adheres to the adjacent wires or threads.